

**DASCHE SPARTANS
SPORTS ORGANIZATION**

ATHLETICS HANDBOOK

Revised September 2023

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Introduction

The DasCHE Spartans Sports Organization was established to provide homeschooled athletes ages 8 to 19 in the South Dallas Metroplex area and surrounding counties, with the opportunity to participate in competitive sports. Games take place on a local level against other homeschool teams, private and charter schools, and some public-school teams. Local games are in preparation for regional and national level competitions against other homeschool organizations. Currently, the DasCHE Spartans Sports Organization offers baseball, basketball, football, volleyball, and cheerleading.

Mission

To partner with parents as they disciple their children through participation in competitive homeschool sports, to the glory of God. We will endeavor to train players enrolled in our programs to put Christ first, to endure hardship, and to live as Christ lived.

Statement of Beliefs

We are a Christian organization. All coaches, administrators and other individuals in leadership positions shall agree to and are expected to follow Biblical guidelines for personal behavior.

Definition of a Homeschool Student/Athlete

(Definition taken from the National Christian Homeschool Championships (NCHC) website, www.nchclive.com/guidelines)

“Homeschooling” is defined to mean that a student’s education is parent-directed.

As such, the parents shall be involved in their child’s education by assuming the role of principal or headmaster, thereby (1) setting the date and requirements for high school graduation; (2) selecting and approving course materials and study schedules; and (3) selecting tutors, correspondence courses, videos, computer courses, and similar resources for their child’s education. Homeschooling would also include “the person of legal responsibility” of the student filling the role of a parent.

Every athlete participating in DasCHE Spartans Sports must be 51% homeschooled. A normal course load for a full-time student is six (6) core courses; therefore, if a student-athlete is taking more than three (3) courses at a public, private, or vocational school, he/she is not considered 51% homeschooled. If there are special circumstances, a student may apply for a hardship exemption.

Player Eligibility

- Each player family must be members of the DasCHE Spartans Sports Organization
- Players and parents must agree to and sign the Player Registration and Medical Authorization Form for the sport they are participating in
- Maintain passing grades
- Have a current sports physical (good for 1 year)
- Each sport will also follow their respective homeschool national guidelines, i.e. NCHC Basketball Eligibility Guidelines found at <http://nchclive.com/guidelines>

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS

Attendance

Players are expected to attend all practices and games. In addition, all players are expected to be on time for all practices and games. If a player must miss or be late for a game or practice, the player or parent should contact the coach as early as possible. While there will be no immediate consequences for excused late or missed attendance, game playing time may be affected at the coach's discretion.

Parents are responsible for transportation of players to and from practices and games.

Practices and Games

Players should demonstrate a 110% effort, a teachable attitude, and submission to authority of coaches and officials. Each player should remember they are part of a TEAM and be willing to serve in any role to build TEAM success. Avoid the use of profanity or demeaning speech on all occasions, even in the "heat of competition."

Suspensions, Technical Fouls, Cautions, Ejections, and Dismissals

Any athlete receiving a conduct technical foul, penalty, or a verbal caution due to a lack of self-control may be removed for the remainder of the game. Any athlete who displays a negative response to an official or to a coach may be removed for the remainder of the game. Any athlete receiving an ejection from the game due to an inappropriate and/or flagrant conduct may be suspended from the next game and may also be required to attend a coaches/parent and/or committee meeting. A subsequent ejection may result in removal from the team for the remainder of the season. We do not want our athletes doing anything that would cause them to be ejected from a game. Such behavior does not show Christ-likeness, nor does it show respect for the sport, the officials, the coaches, or self.

An athlete's response to a corrected offense is more important than the offense itself. The athlete's response defines and reveals character in a more obvious way. We as Christians are not permitted to respond in a disrespectful way. It is therefore necessary for us to be accountable so that we might mature in our responses and in the character and humility of Christ. Therefore, if an athlete continues to display unwillingness to change, blatant disrespect for authority, or an attitude/action that is contrary to the Christian philosophy, the athlete will be removed from the team at that time.

Appearance

All athletes and coaches shall make a positive statement with their appearance at all DASCHE events and contests by being well groomed; appropriately dressed before, during, and after competition; uniforms properly laundered; no visible undergarments; arrive at the athletic venue and warm up in appropriate uniform. The DASCHE standard is to be morally upright and exhibit good taste in our appearance so as not to draw attention to ourselves, represent the DASCHE organization and team well, and glorify the Lord in all that we do.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary actions will be determined by the Coach and/or the Sports Management Team and will be determined on a case by case basis. Disciplinary actions include but are not limited to: loss of playing time, oral or written reprimands, game suspensions, dismissal or expulsions, or loss of DasCHE membership. DasCHE Spartans Sports Organization will cooperate to the extent legally required with social media sites, internet service providers, local, state, and federal officials in investigations or with other legal requests, whether criminal or civil actions.

An athlete may also be dismissed from a team due to:

1. An unteachable or uncooperative attitude, or
2. An act or deed that harms the testimony of the team and/or the DasCHE organization. Such acts include but are not limited to: inappropriate posts on social media or use of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs.

Our unchanging goal is to accurately reflect the character of Christ in our attitudes and sportsmanship in an ever-increasing way. Coaches will look for and encourage this character trait; any athlete who does not desire to pursue Godly character will not play Spartans Sports.

WHAT WE EXPECT OF PARENTS

Practices and Games

Please see to it that your player is present and on time to every practice and every game. Plan on arriving a few minutes early before practice, so that your player has time to get ready, rather than rushing in after practice has begun. Arrival time for games is generally determined at the discretion of the coach. It is very important for the safety of your athlete that they have time to warm up and stretch and to focus on their goals and strategy as directed by the coach. The success of the team and the safety of your player are at stake when they are late for games.

During the games

Demonstrate and promote good sportsmanship. Encourage all players with clapping and cheering from the bleachers. Please stay off the court or field and refrain from coaching from the stands. It is very distracting to your player to receive coaching instructions from multiple sources, while they are attempting to contend with their opponents. It demonstrates confidence in the coaching staff and the players when you let them do their part and you encourage them. Please avoid any contact with game officials. One of the ways we reinforce submission to authority is by the way we respond to them. If we do not agree with a call, the coach has recourse according to the rules, and we must content ourselves with that. We want our players to know the proper way to appeal to authorities.

After the Game:

If you have questions or disagreements about how a game was coached or about player utilization during the game, please refrain from approaching the coach immediately after the game. Wait until the following day. Emotions run high in competitive situations – this is true for the players, coaches, and parents. The coaching staff performs a post-game evaluation to consider what did/did not work and what could have been done differently. Waiting a full 24 hour period to communicate with the coach allows for the conversation to be more productive and less clouded by emotion.

Conduct

Parents should encourage and support the coaches, team, and individual players. Refrain from harsh criticism of the team, opponents, coaches, officials, or Spartans organization.

Parents will ensure their actions and interactions with other Spartans families honor God and are respectful of other players and families in the organization. Parents understand that not every family holds the same set of values. Actions that may seem fine to some may bring offense to others. Every effort will be made not to offer any offense.

Volunteers

The backbone of homeschool athletics is family help and support. Opportunities include: stats and clock keeping at games, concessions, filming games, admission table at home games, and fundraisers. Our organization will be only as successful as you make it, so please do everything you can to help.

Fees

We have deliberately established fees at a minimum to enable the participation of all interested players. Please note that even when all fees are paid, we will still need to raise funds to meet all our obligations. Therefore, please be diligent about fees due and their due dates. Thank you for your cooperation.

EXPECTATION OF COACHES:

- Abide by the guidelines of the DasCHE Spartans Organization.
- Agree to and follow the DasCHE Spartans Statement of Beliefs.
- To be a role model and be Christ-like in all activities and at all times.
- Be responsible for their own behavior and the behavior of their team members, their parents, and fans.
- To be respectful of other players, coaches, fans, and officials at all times.
- To provide a sports environment for their team that is free of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and abusive language at all DASCHE events.
- Place the emotional and physical well-being of their players ahead of a personal desire or external pressure to win.
- Never publicly demean a player, official, opposing coach, or parent.
- Ensure that their players are supervised by a coach or another designated adult at all times.
- To never allow their players to be left unattended or unsupervised at a game or practice.
- Never knowingly permit an injured player to practice, play or return to the game.
- To ensure that practice facilities and equipment are safe and up to standard.
- Take the initiative in resolving any known or suspected conflict relating to a player or family using the principle found in Matthew 18.
- Accept positive and negative feedback graciously as from the Lord.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

We are a Christian organization and abide by Biblical principles. Being a member of any Spartans Sports Team is a privilege not a right. DasCHE Spartans members (athletes, coaches, leaders, and parents) are responsible for their own behavior when communicating with social media and will be held accountable for the content of the communications that they state/post on social media locations. It is the responsibility of all Users to carefully consider their behavior and what they place online when communicating with or “friending” any individual.

Guidelines include but are not limited to the following:

- No cyberbullying is permitted. This is defined as the use of electronic technologies to hurt or harm other people. Examples include: Sending offensive text messages or emails; Posting statements that are not true and create rumors; or Circulating embarrassing photos of a classmate online.
- No conversation in regard to terrorist threats.
- No foul or explicit language.
- No references to the DasCHE association or any entity of the association in a negative fashion.
- No sexually explicit language or photographs.
- No messages that could be interpreted as racially insensitive.

Disciplinary actions will be determined by the Sports Management Team and will be determined on a case by case basis. Disciplinary actions include but are not limited to: loss of playing time, loss of DasCHE Spartans membership, oral or written reprimands, game suspensions, coach suspensions, dismissal, or expulsions. DasCHE Spartans Sports Organization will cooperate to the extent legally required with social media sites, internet service providers, local, state, and federal officials in investigations or with other legal requests, whether criminal or civil actions.

UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT POLICY

Uniforms will be issued at the beginning of the season upon receipt of a deposit and a signed Uniform and Equipment Agreement. Every player is responsible to bring his or her uniform to every game. Uniforms should be cleaned prior to each game. Uniforms provided are the property of DasCHE Spartans Sports Organization and must be returned in good condition at the end of the season.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY

Matthew 18: 15-17; Matthew 5:23,24

It is inevitable in any endeavor involving numerous people of diverse personalities, interests, and goals, but to have conflict. EXPECT IT. However, as with any other issue, we are instructed by the word of God how to deal with those conflicts. Before we look at instructions on how to resolve conflict, some general observations first:

1. These instructions, given by the Lord Jesus Himself, apply both when we are offended and when we know we have offended. In either case, we are never off the hook; we must move towards resolution.
2. It is also important to note from the scriptures cited that our relationships one with another are more important than our conflicts. We should keep that in mind.
3. Our communion with the Lord Jesus Christ hinges on the harmony of our relationships one with another.

What to do when there is a conflict:

1. Go Privately:
The first instruction is to go to the offended / offender alone and debate or argue your case. Avoid the temptation to discuss details with others who are not directly involved.
2. Take someone else:
If the person will not hear you, take someone else with you. Try to keep the conflict in as small a sphere as possible.
3. Bring it to the organization:
If it is a conflict within your team, bring it to the attention of your player's coach first. If it extends beyond your team, you can bring it to the attention of your player's coach and a member of the Sports Management Team. If necessary, we will bring it to the attention of the DasCHE Sports Board.

APPENDIX A

Sports Injury Prevention Tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics

3/16/2017

More American children are competing in sports than ever before. Sports help children and adolescents keep their bodies fit and feel good about themselves. However, there are some important injury prevention tips that can help parents promote a safe, optimal sports experience for their child.

Injury Risks

All sports have a risk of injury. Fortunately, for the vast majority of youth, the benefits of sports participation outweigh the risks. In general, the more contact in a sport, the greater the risk of a traumatic injury. However, most injuries in young athletes are due to overuse.

The most frequent types of sports injuries are sprains (injuries to ligaments) strains (injuries to muscles), and stress fractures (injuries to bones). Injury occurs when excessive stress is placed on tendons, joints, bones and muscle. In a growing child, point tenderness over a bone should be evaluated further by a medical provider even if there is minimal swelling or limitation in motion. Contact your pediatrician if you have additional questions or concerns.

To reduce the risk of injury:

- Take time off. Plan to have at least 1 day off per week and at least one month off per year from training for a particular sport to allow the body to recover.
- Wear the right gear. Players should wear appropriate and properly fit protective equipment such as pads (neck, shoulder, elbow, chest, knee, shin), helmets, mouthpieces, face guards, protective cups, and eyewear. Young athletes should not assume that protective gear will prevent all injuries while performing more dangerous or risky activities.
- Strengthen muscles. Conditioning exercises during practice strengthens muscles used in play.
- Increase flexibility. Stretching exercises after games or practice can increase flexibility. Stretching should also be incorporated into a daily fitness plan.
- Use the proper technique. This should be reinforced during the playing season.
- Take breaks. Rest periods during practice and games can reduce injuries and prevent heat illness.
- Play safe. Strict rules against headfirst sliding (baseball and softball), spearing (football), and checking (in hockey) should be enforced.
- Do not play through pain.
- Avoid heat illness by drinking plenty of fluids before, during and after exercise or play; decrease or stop practices or competitions during high heat/humidity periods; wear light clothing.

Sports-Related Emotional Stress

The pressure to win can cause significant emotional stress for a child. Sadly, many coaches and parents consider winning the most important aspect of sports. Young athletes should be judged on effort, sportsmanship and hard work. They should be rewarded for trying hard and for improving their skills rather than punished or criticized for losing a game or competition. The main goal should be to have fun and learn lifelong physical activity skills.

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APPENDIX B

A FACT SHEET FOR High School Parents



This sheet has information to help protect your teens from concussion or other serious brain injury.

What Is a Concussion?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury—or TBI—caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. This fast movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging the brain cells.

How Can I Help Keep My Teens Safe?

Sports are a great way for teens to stay healthy and can help them do well in school. To help lower your teens' chances of getting a concussion or other serious brain injury, you should:

- Help create a culture of safety for the team.
 - Work with their coach to teach ways to lower the chances of getting a concussion.
 - Emphasize the importance of reporting concussions and taking time to recover from one.
 - Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
 - Tell your teens that you expect them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- When appropriate for the sport or activity, teach your teens that they must wear a helmet to lower the chances of the most serious types of brain or head injury. There is no "concussion-proof" helmet. Even with a helmet, it is important for teens to avoid hits to the head.

Talk with your teens about concussion. Tell them to report their concussion symptoms to you and their coach right away. Some teens think concussions aren't serious or worry that if they report a concussion they will lose their position on the team or look weak. Remind them that *it's better to miss one game than the whole season.*

How Can I Spot a Possible Concussion?

Teens who show or report one or more of the signs and symptoms listed below—or simply say they just "don't feel right" after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body—may have a concussion or other serious brain injury.

Signs Observed by Parents

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Forgets an instruction, is confused about an assignment or position, or is unsure of the game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events *prior to* or *after* a hit or fall

Symptoms Reported by Teens

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness, or double or blurry vision
- Bothered by light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Confusion, or concentration or memory problems
- Just not "feeling right," or "feeling down"

**GOOD TEAMMATES KNOW:
IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON.**



cdc.gov/HEADSUP

CONCUSSIONS AFFECT EACH TEEN DIFFERENTLY.

While most teens with a concussion feel better within a couple of weeks, some will have symptoms for months or longer. Talk with your teens' healthcare provider if their concussion symptoms do not go away or if they get worse after they return to their regular activities.



Plan ahead. What do you want your teen to know about concussion?

What Are Some More Serious Danger Signs to Look Out For?

In rare cases, a dangerous collection of blood (hematoma) may form on the brain after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body and can squeeze the brain against the skull. Call 9-1-1, or take your teen to the emergency department right away if, after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, he or she has one or more of these danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other
- Drowsiness or inability to wake up
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Slurred speech, weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea, convulsions or seizures (shaking or twitching)
- Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out). Even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously

Teens who continue to play while having concussion symptoms or who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—have a greater chance of getting another concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs while the brain is still healing from the first injury can be very serious, and can affect a teen for a lifetime. It can even be fatal.



What Should I Do If My Teen Has a Possible Concussion?

As a parent, if you think your teen may have a concussion, you should:

1. Remove your teen from play.
2. Keep your teen out of play the day of the injury. Your teen should be seen by a healthcare provider and only return to play with permission from a healthcare provider who is experienced in evaluating for concussion.
3. Ask your teen's healthcare provider for written instructions on helping your teen return to school. You can give the instructions to your teen's school nurse and teacher(s) and return-to-play instructions to the coach and/or athletic trainer.

Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Only a healthcare provider should assess a teen for a possible concussion. You may not know how serious the concussion is at first, and some symptoms may not show up for hours or days. A teen's return to school and sports should be a gradual process that is carefully managed and monitored by a healthcare provider.

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To learn more,
go to cdc.gov/HEADSUP

